

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 /097 W
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, AO
SUBJ: UNITA LEADER SAVIMBI INTERVIEWED IN KINSHASA

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REF: LISBON 8203 (DTG 211747Z OCT 77)

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED:

SUMMARY: IN AN EXCLUSIVE MID-OCTOBER INTERVIEW, UNITA
PRESIDENT JONAS SAVIMBI SAID ALL CONTESTING GROUPS IN
ANGOLA EVENTUALLY WOULD HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER TO SOLVE

ANGOLA'S PROBLEMS. WHILE RECOGNIZING THE NEED TO TALK WITH THE MPLA, HE REJECTED TALKS WITH PRESIDENT NETO. IN A DEPARTURE FROM PREVIOUS STATEMENTS, SAVIMBI DID NOT SET ANY PRECONDITIONS FOR TALKS WITH THE MPLA, BUT IMPLIED THAT THE TIME FOR A DIALOGUE IS NOT YET RIGHT. END SUMMARY.

1. THE PORTUGUESE RIGHT-WING WEEKLY "O DIABO" PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 8 AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH UNITA PRESIDENT JONAS SAVIMBI. THE INTERVIEW WAS OBTAINED IN THE THIRD WEEK IN OCTOBER IN KINSHASA. THE FOLLOWING ARE HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE INTERVIEW:

2. DIALOGUE WITH THE MPLA: QUERIED ABOUT ANGOLAN FOREIGN MINISTER PAULO JORGE'S REJECTION OF TALKS BETWEEN THE MPLA AND ITS ENEMIES (REFTEL), SAVIMBI REPLIED THAT UNITA'S OPINION AS EXPRESSED IN ITS FOURTH CONGRESS ACKNOWLEDGED THE PRESENCE OF SOME "SOUND INDIVIDUALS" IN THE MPLA. THEREFORE, UNITA WAS NOT TRYING TO DESTROY THE MPLA. UNITA WAS THINKING ABOUT THE ANGOLA OF TOMORROW, WHEN THE FNLA, THE MPLA, UNITA, AND "OTHER PATRIOTIC ORGANIZATIONS" WOULD HAVE TO FIND A COMMON SOLUTION FOR COMMON PROBLEMS. ANGOLA COULD NOT REMAIN IN PERPETUAL WAR. UNITA, THROUGH ITS ARMED STRUGGLE, WAS PROMOTING THE CONDITIONS NECESSARY TO WHAT SAVIMBI TERMED "THE EVENTUAL NATIONAL DEBATE OVER COMMON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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METHODS AND OBJECTIVES, AND HAPPINESS FOR THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE."

3. BUT NOT WITH NETO: SAVIMBI SAID THERE ARE INDIVIDUALS IN THE MPLA WITH WHOM HE WOULD NEVER AGAIN TALK, NAMING PRESIDENT NETO AND SENIOR MPLA MEMBERS LUCIO LARA, IKO CARREIRA, AND PAULO JORGE. SAVIMBI IS CERTAIN THAT NETO WILL ASK TO TALK WITH HIM, BUT DECLARED, "I CAN GUARANTEE YOU THAT WE WILL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM."

4. UNITA'S STRATEGY: UNITA SEEKS THROUGH GUERILLA WAR TO DEMORALIZE THE MPLA, SAVIMBI SAID. LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE "CUBAN IMPERIALISTS" WILL BE ISOLATED IN FORTIFIED VILLAGES. ONE DAY UNITA WILL BECOME SO STRONG THAT THE MPLA GOVERNMENT WILL FALL. SAVIMBI DOES NOT THINK THERE WILL BE A CHANGE IN MPLA POLITICAL STRATEGY, AND IS NOT TRYING TO EFFECT IT. WHAT UNITA SEEKS IS TO ADVANCE BY STEPS UNTIL THE LUANDA REGIME IS DEFEATED.

5. COOPERATION WITH THE FNLA: ASKED ABOUT RELATIONS

WITH THE FNLA AND THE POSSIBILITY OF MILITARY COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE TWO GROUPS, SAVIMBI SAID THAT ALL THOSE WHO
ARE READY TO FIGHT ARE ALLIES. IF THE FNLA IS CAPABLE
AS A COMBATIVE FORCE, A WAY COULD BE FOUND TO COOPERATE.

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INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05

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BUT EVEN IF THE FNLA IS INCAPABLE OF FIGHTING, THE
MOVEMENT WOULD HAVE TO HAVE A VOICE IN A FUTURE ANGOLAN
GOVERNMENT.

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6. RELATIONS WITH MPLA DISSIDENTS: ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY "UNDERSTANDING" BETWEEN UNITA AND MPLA DISSIDENTS GENTIL VIANA AND MARIO AND JOAQUIM PINTO DE ANDRADE, SAVIMBI REPLIED THAT UNITA HAD ALWAYS ENJOYED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THEM, AND CURRENTLY HAS "CERTAIN CONTACTS" EVEN WITH INDIVIDUALS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MAY 27 COUP LEADER, NITO ALVES. HOWEVER, SAVIMBI DENIED HAVING HAD ANY CONTACTS WITH VIANA AND THE PINTO DE ANDRADE BROTHERS SINCE UNITA LEFT LUANDA.

7. SOUTH AFRICA AND SWAPO: SAVIMBI REITERATED HIS DENIAL THAT UNITA RECEIVES HELP FROM SOUTH AFRICA, AND DENIED THAT UNITA WAS FIGHTING SWAPO IN ORDER TO ASSIST SOUTH AFRICA IN NAMIBIA. IT WAS UNITA, SAVIMBI CLAIMED, THAT ASSISTED SWAPO DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF THE LATTER'S ARMED STRUGGLE. SAVIMBI ACKNOWLEDGED THAT SWAPO DEPENDED FOR ITS SUPPLIES ON PORTS CONTROLLED BY THE MPLA, BUT SAID UNITA WAS COMPELLED TO DEFEND ITSELF WHEN SWAPO TURNED ON UNITA. UNITA WOULD CONTINUE TO DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST ANY ATTACK BY SWAPO.

8. THE BENGUELA RAILWAY: ASKED IF OPENING THE BENGUELA RAILWAY WAS THE PRICE UNITA WOULD HAVE TO PAY FOR ZAMBIAN SUPPORT, SAVIMBI SAID, "I WANT TO SIMPLY RESPOND THAT THE BENGUELA RAILWAY WILL NEVER AGAIN FUNCTION" AS LONG AS THE MILITARY AND POLITICAL SITUATION REMAINS THE SAME. WHOEVER FELT WRONGED BY THIS POLICY WAS AGAINST UNITA.

9. U.S. RECOGNITION OF THE NETO GOVERNMENT: ASKED TO COMMENT ON THE REPORTED REVIEW BY THE USG OF ITS ANGOLAN POLICY, SAVIMBI REPLIED:

"AT THE MOMENT WHEN THE MPLA FEELS COMPLETELY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEMORALIZED AND WHEN THE MORALE OF THE CUBAN AND MPLA SOLDIERS IS QUITE DEPRESSED; WHEN THE AFRICAN COUNTRIES HAVE REALIZED AFTER ALL THAT THE PRESENCE OF CUBANS IN ANGOLA NOT ONLY REPRESENTS A THREAT TO THE TERRITORY, BUT ALSO REPRESENTS A REAL THREAT TO INDEPENDENCE ACQUIRED BY SWEAT AND BLOOD; WHEN AFRICAN COUNTRIES ARE NO LONGER AFRAID TO SUPPORT UNITA; WHEN THE MPLA PROVED WITH THE INVASION OF SHABA THAT THE CUBANS WERE IN ANGOLA TO DESTROY OTHER GOVERNMENTS AND

NOT ONLY TO SUPPORT AGOSTINHO NETO; WHEN THE WAR
BETWEEN ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA REVEALS THIS SAME
DANGER; WHEN CUBANS ARE FOUND IN THE SAHARA; WHEN
THE CUBANS TODAY MAKE UP THE 'PRETORIAN GUARDS'
FOR MANY UNPOPULAR REGIMES IN AFRICA -- IT WOULD BE
A SHAME IF THE UNITED STATES WERE TO RECOGNIZE
THE MPLA GOVERNMENT."

SAVIMBI DECLARED THAT U.S. RECOGNITION WOULD NOT ALTER
THE COURSE OF EVENTS IN ANGOLA. THE U.S., SAVIMBI
SAID, NEEDS TO BE INFORMED ABOUT WHAT IS REALLY
HAPPENING IN ANGOLA, AND VOWED TO INTENSIFY UNITA
EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE AMERICAN PUBLIC OPINION.
REFERRING TO THE LEON DASH ARTICLES, SAVIMBI SAID,
"AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST, WHO WAS WITH US FOR MORE THAN
SEVEN MONTHS, DID A STUPENDOUS JOB OF REVEALING TO THE
AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT THE DESTINY OF THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE
HAS NOT BEEN DRAWN UP AND SEALED."

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10. PORTUGUESE POLICY TOWARD ANGOLA: SAVIMBI DENOUNCED THE "COURTSHIP" BETWEEN THE LISBON AND LUANDA GOVERNMENTS, AND SAID THAT, IF PORTUGAL INTENDED TO BETRAY THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE A SECOND TIME, RECONCILIATION WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT. UNITA HAD ACCEPTED AND FORGOTTEN WHAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAPPENED BECAUSE OF THE ALVOR AGREEMENT, BECAUSE AT THAT TIME PORTUGAL DID NOT HAVE A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT. UNITA WAS PAYING THE PRICE FOR ALVOR WITH ITS GUNS IN THE TRENCHES. BUT NOW THAT PORTUGAL HAS A DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED PRESIDENT -- WHOM UNITA GREATLY RESPECTED -- TO SUPPORT THE MANEUVERS OF THE LUANDA GOVERNMENT WOULD BE INCONGRUENT WITH PORTUGUESE DEMOCRACY. SAVIMBI WAS AWARE THAT PORTUGAL IS NOW TRAINING HELICOPTER PILOTS FOR THE MPLA, THE THE GOP IS ASSISTING THE MPLA NAVY, AND THAT AN EFFORT WAS BEING MADE IN PORTUGAL TO RECRUIT MERCENARIES FOR THE MPLA. BUT THIS WOULD NOT ALTER THE ANGOLAN SITUATION, HE SAID: "UNITA CAN RESIST FOR YEARS AND YEARS." SAVIMBI CALLED ON THE GOP TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH ALL GROUPS INVOLVED IN ANGOLA. END UNCLASSIFIED.

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11. COMMENT: SAVIMBI APPEARS CONFIDENT THAT TIME IS ON UNITA'S SIDE. HE APPEARS CONVINCED THAT ALL FACTIONS MUST EVENTUALLY COOPERATE, BUT IS ADAMANT IN HIS OPPOSITION TO TALKS WITH NETO. NOTABLY MISSING FROM SAVIMBI'S STATEMENTS IS THE IMPOSITION OF CONDITIONS FOR DIALOGUE; I.E. THE WITHDRAWAL OF CUBAN TROOPS. END LIMITED OFFICIAL USE.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009